

Message Text

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16

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 SAB-01 AID-05 /072 W

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7394

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NY

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 2535

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE, XF

SUBJECT: APRIL 24 SYRIAN MEDIA COVERAGE OF LEBANESE SITUATION

1. DAMASCUS MORNING NEWS BROADCAST APRIL 24 HIGHLIGHTED VISIT OF JORDANIAN PRIME MINISTER RIFA'I TO DAMASCUS PREVIOUS DAY FOR TALKS WITH PRESIDENT ASAD ABOUT SITUATION IN LEBANON AND ABOUT FURTHER SYRIAN-JORDANIAN BILATERAL COORDINATION. OTHER LEBANESE ITEMS REPORTED INCLUDE JUMBLATT'S CALL FOR ESTABLISHING LOCAL ADMINISTRATION, SAEB SALAM'S CRITICISM OF IT AS STEP TOWARD IMPLEMENTING PARTITION AND PATRIARCH KHREISH'S APPEAL TO LEBANESE TO STOP FIGHTING AND ALLOW REALIZATION OF SYRIAN INITIATIVE. RADIO STATED THAT, ACCORDING TO NEWS FROM BEIRUT, PRESIDENT FRANJIEH WILL SIGN CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TODAY.

2. TOP STORY IN AT-THAWRAH WAS SYRIAN-ARAB NEWS AGENCY REPORT FROM BEIRUT ON JUMBLATT'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE HAD BEGUN TO PUT INTO EFFECT SYSTEM OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION IN DISTRICTS OF SHOUF AND ALEY. ARTICLE MENTIONED FORMER PRIMIN SALAM'S OPPOSITION TO THESE STEPS AND UNCLASSIFIED

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ALSO HIS CRITICISM OF CONDUCT SOME CHRISTIAN ELEMENTS, BOTH

OF WHICH APPEARED AIMED AT PARTITION.

3. SECOND SANA REPORT FROM BEIRUT STATED THAT DRUZE LEADER SHEIKH AL-'AQL MOHAMMAD ABU-SHAWRA HAD EXPRESSED APPRCIATION TO PRESIDENT ASAD FOR SYRIA'S INTEREST IN SETTLING CRISIS AND LEADING LEBANON TO PEACE. SHAQRA HAD MET WITH VISITING DELEGATION FROM NATIONAL COMMAND OF SYRIAN BAATH PARTY.

4. PRESS REPORTED THAT PRESIDENT ASAD HAD RECEIVED JORDAN-
IAN PRIME MINISTER RIFA'I AT 1330 APRIL 23 IN PRESENCE
OF PRIMIN AYYOUBI AND FONMIN KHADDAM (SHO HAD JUST
RETURNED FROM AFRO-ARAB CONFERENCE IN DAKAR). RIFA'I
DEPARTED DAMASCUS AT 1800 AFTER DELIVERING MESSAGE FROM
KING HUSSEIN TO ASAD.

5. NEITHER PRESS NOR RADIO MENTIONED THE SECRETARY'S
PRESS STATEMENT IN LONDON. THERE WAS NO EDITORIAL
COMMENT ON LEBANON IN TODAY'S PRESS.
MURPHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, CIVIL DISORDERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976DAMASC02535
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760156-0330
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760426/aaaaavvv.tel
Line Count: 81
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 AUG 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 AUG 2004 by cookms>; APPROVED <20 DEC 2004 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: APRIL 24 SYRIAN MEDIA COVERAGE OF LEBANESE SITUATION
TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE, XF
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006